

being seen by some Somalis as a proxy of the West and little different than its predecessors. This is extremely worrisome, especially if we believe that this government offers the best chance for establishing stability and inclusive governance in Somalia.

Even more than the threat of piracy, the terrorist threat shows why we need to be paying more attention to Somalia. Al-Qaida and its affiliates continue to exploit Somalia's instability, which has real ramifications for our national security. Last month, the Justice Department announced that terrorism charges were being brought in the District of Minnesota against eight defendants for recruiting and raising funds for Somali-Americans to fight on behalf of al Shebaab. Fourteen people have now been charged in this investigation, reportedly the largest group of American citizens suspected of joining an extremist movement with links to al-Qaida. We should not equate these individuals with al-Qaida suspects, but we should be mindful of what Director of the National Counterterrorism Center Michael Leiter testified to in September—that “the potential for al-Qaida operatives in Somalia to commission Americans to return to the United States and launch attacks against the Homeland remains of significant concern.” Our close partners in the region—Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda—are also justifiably concerned about al Shebaab's threat to attack them.

Recent history has shown that there are no easy answers to Somalia's troubles. Moreover, it has shown that we can complicate and even aggravate dynamics in Somalia, and many Somalis continue to view the United States with a high level of suspicion and resentment. We need to be conscious of this. But that does not mean we should just disengage and let matters in Somalia play out, as some commentators suggest. Rather, what I believe the recent history of the United States involvement in Somalia should teach us is that we cannot afford a half-hearted or fragmented policy toward Somalia where we are not clearly communicating to Somalis our intentions and our commitment. We need a comprehensive strategy toward Somalia that includes serious, high-level diplomatic support for a sustainable and inclusive peace. I have been calling for such a strategy for nearly a decade now and I still do not believe we have one. With piracy resurging and the terrorist threat more real than ever, I hope that will finally change.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING TOM GRAFF

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I take this opportunity to honor the life of Tom Graff, a pioneer of the environmental movement. Mr. Graff passed away on November 12, 2009, after a long battle with cancer. He was 65.

Born in Honduras in January 1944, Tom Graff was the son of German Jewish refugees. He spent his childhood in Syracuse, NY, attending Phillips Exeter Academy. He later graduated from Harvard University, Harvard Law School, and the London College of Economics. After graduation, Tom clerked for Federal judge Carl McGowen in Washington, DC, and was a legislative assistant to New York Mayor John Lindsay. In 1970, he moved to California to work for Howard, Prim, Smith, Rice & Downs, a law firm based in San Francisco.

In 1971, Tom founded the California office of the Environmental Defense Fund. From then until 2008 when he retired, Tom served as Environmental Defense Fund's regional director. For more than 37 years, Tom worked tirelessly and passionately as an advocate for the environment. He established a new form of environmental activism based on the idea that economics could, and probably should, play a significant role in environmental policymaking. Tom believed that paying attention to how economic incentives influenced business and personal behavior was critical to bringing about environmental improvements.

Although he was involved with a number of environmental issues, it was Tom's significant contributions to water policy that left an indelible mark in California. From the American River to Mono Lake to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, Tom strove to ensure that water was distributed appropriately, and that the environment got its fair share. Working together with Senator Bill Bradley of New Jersey and Congressman GEORGE MILLER of Martinez, Tom was a guiding force behind the Central Valley Project Improvement Act of 1991, a milestone in the environmental movement to protect the delta. He helped craft the historic proposal to use water markets and public subsidies that ultimately resolved the controversy around Mono Lake. He also did battle with the East Bay Municipal Utility District when it sought a second source of water from the American River, known for its abundant fall salmon run. Concerned for the health of the river, the Environmental Defense Fund filed suit against EBMUD. Seventeen years later, a landmark decision designated a baseline environmental flow need for the American River that stands to this day as a benchmark in river policy.

Throughout his career, Tom's commitment to conservation and the benefits it brought was evident in the work he did every day. His lifetime of contributions and his stewardship of the environment will not soon be forgotten.

Tom is survived by his wife Sharona Barzilay; his three children Samantha, Benjamin, and Rebecca; and two grandsons Avi and Rafael. I extend my deepest sympathies to his family.

Tom was a true pioneer and advocate for a healthy and sustainable environ-

ment, working tirelessly to provide new approaches for managing natural resources. His efforts will continue to shape California's water policies for generations to come. •

REMEMBERING MITCH DEMIENTIEFF

• Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, last April I spoke about the loss of Buddy Brown, a leader of the Athabascan people of interior Alaska, who served as president of the Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc. Buddy died at the age of 39.

Today it is my sad duty to report the passing of another Athabascan leader and former president of the Tanana Chiefs Conference, Mitch Demientieff of Nenana. Mitch died unexpectedly on Tuesday, December 1, at the age of 57. Like Buddy, he left us too soon. He accomplished so much in a short time and was taken from us when he had so much more to give.

Mitch was first elected president of the Tanana Chiefs Conference in 1973 at the age of 20. He was elected to serve in that role again in 1987. Today, the Tanana Chiefs Conference is an economic powerhouse in interior Alaska employing hundreds of people and administering a wide range of Bureau of Indian Affairs and Indian Health Service programs on behalf of some 10,000 Native people in a territory that extends over 235,000 square miles. TCC is looked upon as a national pioneer in Indian self determination and that is in large measure due to the leadership initiatives of Mitch Demientieff. Under Mitch's leadership, TCC created a regionwide health care delivery system which is today anchored by the Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center in Fairbanks.

Mitch had the good fortune of serving as president of TCC in the run-up to passage of the Indian Self Determination and Educational Assistance Act of 1975. He positioned TCC as an early adapter of this powerful tool through which Native people rely upon their tribes, rather than the Federal Government, to deliver Federal Indian programs and services. TCC has used these authorities wisely to improve the quality of services to the people of interior Alaska and provide life changing career opportunities to Native people from Fairbanks and communities throughout its region. It also began to administer housing, lands management, tribal government assistance, public safety, education and employment and natural resources programs.

One of the characteristics that distinguish Alaska's Native people is the continued reliance on traditional ways of living in our villages. Subsistence, the use of the Earth's resources for cultural and emotional sustenance, as well as food, is the way of life in interior Alaska.

Mitch Demientieff, even while running a multi-million dollar tribal enterprise, never forgot that subsistence